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ABSTRACT

College outdoor program leaders are often paraprofessionals, who may have less training than professional outdoor educators, yet must deal with the same types of problems on the trail. This paper describes the Outdoor Action (OA) Program at Princeton University, and outlines the training assessment and development model used to train OA program leaders. OA operates a number of wilderness programs, including a 6-day orientation for incoming students and day and multiday trips during the academic year. The model provides a checklist of questions to be considered in assessing the requirements of outdoor activities, brainstorming training possibilities, and assembling the training elements into a program. The OA Leader Training Program aims to develop leadership skills and to generate new staff, and has 80-100 student participants each year. While many students do not complete all training segments, all prospective staff must complete and be evaluated on all aspects of training, and are generally paired with experienced staff for an additional "apprenticeship." An outline of OA leader training course guidelines describes training philosophy, goals, teaching methods, pretrip and outdoor classes, simulations of emergency procedures, policies for final-day "walkouts" by the leader trainers, debriefing, and posttrip evaluations. Also outlined are the content and specific concepts taught in wilderness first aid and CPR training, a safety and risk management workshop, group dynamics and facilitation skills workshops, and recertification and ongoing training. (SV)

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Training College Wilderness Leaders.

Rick Curtis

Training college outdoor program leaders is a study in balances. In many cases, these leaders are not paid staff which places them in the category of paraprofessionals. As paraprofessionals, they cannot be expected to have the level of training that a professional outdoor educator such as a NOLS or OB instructor would have. At the same time, these paraprofessional leaders may be required to deal with the same types of problems on the trail. A bee sting or lightning storm along the Appalachian Trail in New Jersey can be just as dangerous as in the middle of the Wind River Range. Finding the balance for what college outdoor program leaders should know and what they can realistically be required to learn is a challenge for all college programs. Each school must evaluate the types of trips it offers, skill level required, and the feasibility of a training program.

Day: **Saturday**
Time: **1:30**

Expanded Description

1. Introduction

Training college outdoor program leaders is a study in balances. In many cases, these leaders are not paid staff which places them in the category of paraprofessionals. As paraprofessionals, they cannot be expected to have the level of training that a professional outdoor educator such as a NOLS or OB instructor would have. At the same time, these paraprofessional leaders may be required to deal with the same types of problems on the trail. A bee sting or lightning storm along the Appalachian Trail in New Jersey can be just as dangerous as in the middle of the Wind River Range. Finding the balance for what college outdoor program leaders should know and what they can realistically be required to learn is a challenge for all college programs. Each school must evaluate the types of trips it offers, skill level required, and the feasibility of a training program.

2. Training Priorities

The material that follows is the model developed by the Outdoor Action Program (OA) at Princeton University over the last twelve years. Outdoor Action operates a number of wilderness programs including a 6-day wilderness pre-orientation program for incoming students, as well as day and multi-day trips throughout the academic year. Leadership training priorities for such a program include the following:

- Wilderness Skills
- Safety Management
- First Aid & Emergency Procedures
- Group Dynamics

3. Training Assessment and Development Model

In order to develop a training program it is important to follow a Training Assessment and Development Model. This model lets you develop your training program around a thorough examination of the activity.

Assess the Activity:

- What skills are needed by participants?
- What skills are needed by instructors?
- What equipment is needed?
- What training in the use of the equipment is needed by instructors, participants?
- What are the risk management factors in the activity? Which can be controlled, which cannot be controlled?

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Brainstorm Training Possibilities:

- What modes of training are best suited to passing on this information, hands-on, simulations, lecture, discussion, etc?
- How much time is required to develop a proper level of skill in the activity?
- How much ongoing training is need to maintain this level of skill?
- Beyond the basic skills of the activity, are their special skills staff need to be able to instruct (not just do) the activity? Are their special rescue/safety skills staff need to do the activity?

In thinking about developing a new activity it is important to ask the following questions.

1. Is this an activity that our current staff is properly trained to deliver?
2. If not, is there an outside source that can provide the necessary training?
3. Once the staff is trained, do we have the ability to continue to generate newly trained staff using either internal or external sources?
4. Do we have the ability to generate instructors for the staff either internally or externally?

At Outdoor Action, as we answer these questions, we determine whether we have the ability to provide the necessary training to staff and to provide the necessary level of training to those who instruct staff. If we can do both of these things, then it is an activity we are willing to pursue. Otherwise, we either find an outside source of expertise to provide the activity or we don't pursue it. This decision is based on our resources of staff and money. If we are going to go to all the effort of adding an activity to our program, we want to be able to continue to offer it.

Put simply:

- Can the staff do it?
- Can the staff teach it to participants?
- Can the staff rescue it?
- Can the staff be retrained?

If we decide that we can handle these elements then we take the different training elements and

Assemble the Training Elements into a Program:
You want to integrate your training elements into a structure that should meet the following criteria:

1. Teaches the skill to someone just starting out
2. Provides a common, base level of knowledge & experience for all staff
3. Provides "hands-on" experience with the skill
4. Allows for assessment of the skill learned (in certain activities)
5. Provides ongoing refresher training

4. Outdoor Action Leader Training Program

The OA Leader Training Program is one of three components of the overall OA Program which also includes a fresh wilderness orientation trip and trips during the academic year. The goals of the Leader Training Program are to develop leadership skills and to generate new staff. OA has 80-100 students participate in the Leader Training Program each year. Some complete the program and do not lead any trips and some students do not complete all the training segments. Merely completing the requirements does not automatically allow one to lead trips. Students are evaluated at several points through the training process and given guidance if they need additional skill building. Also, new leaders are generally paired with students who have led before providing an additional "apprenticeship" for a new leader.

OA requires all prospective leaders, even skilled outdoorspersons like OB and NOLS graduates, to complete all aspects of the Leader Training Program. This assures us that all leaders have a certain minimum level of skill and to learn OA's procedures and practices. It also allows us to evaluate all prospective leaders. We find that the number of requirements helps to select out those who have strong interests in the program. Still, all students who participate in the any aspect of the Leader Training Program

feel they benefit and the skills are useful through out their college years and beyond. This approach differs from that at some schools where potential leaders go through an application and selection process similar to Resident Advisor Programs and then are trained at one time each year.

The Outdoor Action Leader Training Program consists of five different training segments. These are offered several times each semester to allow all students to work the trainings into their University schedule. The five-part training program developed by the Outdoor Action Program is outlined below and each segment is covered in detail in the sections that follow.

- Leader Training Course
- Wilderness First Aid Course
- Safety Management Seminar
- CPR
- Group Skills Workshop

Since OA Leaders go through the training program only once (they do have to keep CPR and first aid current), we also try to provide refresher programs during the year. This program is still under development and our work to date is presented below. OA also has an extensive Leader's Manual that serves as an excellent reference for leaders to polish their skills.

OUTDOOR ACTION LEADER TRAINING COURSE GUIDELINES

This section is taken from the Outdoor Action Leader's Manual.

OA LEADER TRAINING COURSE GUIDELINES

PHILOSOPHY

The Leader Training Course (LTC) is a fundamental part of the OA Program. It serves two purposes; to train new leaders and it stands on its own as a wilderness educational experience. This dual purpose is reflected in the complex nature of leading such a trip. First there is a strong focus on skill training for the participants so that they will have solid skills for when they lead their own trips. In addition, this may be the first OA trip for participants, so they need to go through an experience similar to what their future participants will go through. Just as on a regular OA trip, it is important to share the leadership responsibility with the participants. As they learn more about how to function in the wilderness environment, more responsibility is shifted to them by the leaders.

GOALS

The goal of the LTC is to teach the requisite outdoor and trip planning skills to allow interested persons to lead Outdoor Action trips. Some of the skills are well-defined and easily grasped, such as lighting a stove. Others are much more abstract, involving simultaneous application of principles, equipment, and the confidence born of experience, such as successfully dealing with accidents and injuries. The learning of either type of skill is a matter of two ingredients: instruction and practice. On the LTC, instruction is given in all aspects of trip leadership: background information as well as hard skills. Instruction is given not only by the leader trainers, but also the participants, each of whom will research and teach a class to the whole group. The course is designed as an opportunity to learn and practice the leadership tasks performed on a regular OA 3-season backpacking trip. In order to facilitate learning, a small group is required; the LTC will consist of eight participants and two or three leader trainers. The Basic Leader Training Course covers the basic skills necessary to lead 3-season backpacking trips. A Bike Touring Leader Training Course is also offered to teach the skills necessary to lead multi-day bike touring trips (See OA Bike Leaders Manual). The LTC is divided into three sections—Pre-trip, Trip, and Post-trip.

TEACHING

An important part of the learning process for participants is learning how to teach. This is an essential skill for them to be effective leaders. The Leader Training Course is constructed so that each participant will be responsible for teaching certain skills to the rest of the group. Skills to be taught will be divided up between those which need to be taught before the trip and those which will be taught during the trip. All pre-trip material will be taught by the Leader Trainers to effectively transmit the information and to model effective teaching styles. The other material will be specifically assigned to participants. Pre-trip,

participants will be required to develop a list with a short explanation of the basic concepts behind their topic area and present it to the Leader Trainers. There will be a group debriefing after each teaching session (including those done by the Leader Trainers) to give feedback to the person teaching and to reinforce the importance of good teaching. Teaching is a skill which will also be evaluated on the Evaluation Form. During the trip, participants will teach specific aspects of their subject taken from general topic outlines (see below). In some cases, some parts of the topic will be taught by the leader trainers.

PRE-TRIP

Leader Trainers will meet with the Program Director to discuss goals and strategies for the course including, the philosophy of the Leader Training Program, pre-trip meetings, training during the trip, simulations and walkout policies, and the participant evaluation process at the end of the course.
Groups will meet 5 weeks prior to the trip in order to begin the course all pre-trip planning. Participants are required to attend all group meetings and prepare material for the class they will teach during the trip. Material for the classes will be taken from the OA Leader's Manual, the NOLS Wilderness Guide, other sources as needed. The first and last meetings before the trip itself will be run just like a regular OA backpacking trip pre-trip meeting would be run. This is designed to model how the future leaders would run their own trip.

Classes
Each participant will have one class to prepare prior to the trip. An outline of the basic skills the participant will cover must be given to the Leader Trainers before the trip leaves. During the trip each participant will teach his/her class. After any class is presented, the Leader Trainers should round it out with whatever they have learned out on the trail. Then the group should discuss and critique both the content and the presentation. This is not a test, but rather, an opportunity for helpful feedback. Possible areas for review include, clarity, confidence, creativity, and the ability to hold listeners' interest. Route planning should include setting aside about 2 hours each day for classes.

Schedule of Pre-Trip Sessions
The schedule for the pre-trip sessions is detailed in Table 2.1. The schedule for classes and activities during the week is detailed in Table 2.2. Participants are to be assigned a class from the topics in Table 2.

Pre-Trip Activities		
Meeting	**Classes**	**Other Tasks**
First	Dressing for the Backcountry	Explain OA priorities/goals and how Leader Training Course will operate. Hand out participant applications, Leader's Manuals, and Personal Equipment List. Sign out NOLS Wilderness Guides. Collect trip payment. Participants will be assigned classes. Schedule remaining meetings and decide on due date for class outlines. Read OA Policies and Leader Training Chapter in Leader's Manual for the next meeting
Second	Route Planning Teaching a Skills MSR Stove Class Knot Class - round turn with two half hitches	Tour of Equipment Room. Plan route as a group (needs maps & route plan form).
Third	Food & Menu Planning First Aid & Blister Kits Optimus 111 Stove Class Knot Class - Trucker's Hitch	Check food room for stocks. Tarp set up.
Fourth	General Minimal Impact Class Peak 1 Stove Class Knot Class - Bowline	Assemble group equipment.

Day before trip.	Backpack Class - sizing, wearing, loading	Group Games. Practice tent set up. Review of equipment and food lists - prepare shopping list and buy items. Repack food. Distribute group equipment. Issue personal equipment. Pack backpacks.

Table 2.1

DURING THE TRIP

First Day

The first day should be planned such that the group sets up camp after only _ day of hiking. The Leader Trainers will serve as Leaders-of-the-Day (LD's) (see below). They should inform the group that they will lead the first day just like the first day any OA trip should be led. Before starting off, while the group is stretching, trail technique, minimal impact while hiking, and the schedule for water and sit-down breaks should be mentioned. LD's for the next day will be chosen.

Leaders of the Day (LD's)

LD pairs or trios will lead the middle three days of the trip, with each group in charge of a day from wake up to bedtime. LD's are responsible for everything as if the trip were a regular backpacking trip. This means that they are there to teach and encourage the other participants to take responsibility for running the trip. They are selected the night before by the Leader Trainers and are told how many classes to schedule the next day, and whether or not there will be a simulation. (See simulations below).

During the Trip		
Day	Person	Classes
First Day	Leader Trainers	Blister Care, Water Purification, Dynamics of Accidents Model
	Leader Trainers	Trail Technique
	Leader Trainers	Terrain Association
	Leader Trainers	Campsite Selection
	Participant	Minimal Impact in Camp
Day	Person	Classes
Any Day	Participant	Nutrition
	Participant	Group Games
	Participant	Layering
	Participant	Map reading
	Participant	Compass Use
	Participant	Ten Essentials
	Participant	Hypothermia/Hyperthermia
	Participant	Weather & Lightning Safety
	Leader Trainers	Debriefing
	Leader Trainers	Emergency Procedures
	Leader Trainers	Lost Person Procedures
	Leader Trainers	Knot Practice
	Leader Trainers	Emergency Simulations

Table 2.2

Second Day - Fourth Day

LD's are responsible for getting the group moving at whatever time necessary to comply with the planned route. The LD's keep track of pace, rest stops, blister checks, emotional checks, lead and sweep positions, lunch stop, coordinate breaks for teaching, and supervise campsite selection and construction. This is not to say that these two people do all these things, rather, it is their responsibility to make sure that all of these things get done. LD's will trade off leading with map and compass. LD's are responsible for

getting the group moving at whatever time necessary to comply with the planned route. It is expected that the trainees will handle all aspects of camp selection and setup for the rest of the trip. Trainees should watch each other to make sure all things are handled properly. Leaders should perform tasks assigned to them by trainees rather than taking initiative to do things.

Evening Activities

Evening can include a wide variety of activities. The leaders should have the group evaluate the day, how things progressed, what people learned (see Debriefing below). People should critique the teaching presentations to give feedback to the presenters. Leaders need to maintain a relaxed atmosphere so that this stays low key and informative. Also sharing previous trip experiences can be a useful experience for everyone.

Simulations

Simulations are an important part of the leader training process and it is important that you do several simulations on the trip. Simulations are designed to teach participants some of the technical and group dynamic/leadership skills required in an accident or emergency situation. It is ***required*** that participants be made aware in advance that there will be several simulations during the trip and be told on what day the simulation(s) will take place. This is essential both from an ethical perspective and so that constant anticipation doesn't ruin the trip. The purpose of these simulations is to practice skills and to learn about the complex nature of emergency response. It is *not* a test or evaluation of individual's skills. The idea is that a low-pressure walk-through of the Emergency Procedures will imprint them far better on the participants than a confusing, high-pressure affair. Also, since some may not have first aid, the key is focusing on their overall response, not specific treatments. Keep in mind that an accident scenario can be a highly emotional experience. We want to give people an experience with emergency procedures *not* emotionally traumatize them.

1. Teach Emergency Procedures & Lost Person - These should be taught ***before*** any simulations so that people know what to do. The first simulation should be a walk-through of the OA Emergency Procedures and Lost Person with Leader Trainers explaining the procedures as they go. This is based on proper teaching principles; there is no point in asking the group to do an exercise if they don't have previous training in it. The best scenario is to do one walk-through accident simulation and later do a combined lost person/accident simulation. (See Section 10 - Safety & Emergency Procedures).

2. It is best to do simulations at the end of a day's hiking near your planned campsite. This way, camp can be wholeheartedly set up as part of the simulation and a debrief of the simulation can occur over dinner.

3. A Leader Trainer should be the victim. When the group becomes aware that there is a problem, the other Leader Trainer should indicate that it is a simulation and that the group needs to deal with it. The other Leader Trainer is an observer only, *not* a resource for the group in the rescue and will step in only if it appears that an Accident Potential is developing. Leader Trainers need to know when to call the simulation off; darkness, cold, etc. are just some things which should end the exercise. The observer ends the simulation at an appropriate point, typically when the party going for help starts down the trail. At that point, the Leader Trainers inspect the gear taken by the group hiking out, the first aid measures performed, the camp setup arrangements, and the group cleans up.

4. The LD's are to supervise when the simulation happens. It is not their responsibility to attend to the victim (unless they have the most appropriate first aid skills), but rather, organize the rescue operation and make sure that all members of the group are being used effectively. If no one on the trip has first aid training, the Leader Trainer observer can act solely as a first aider, performing first aid on the "victim" and stating medical requirements, but nothing else.

5. The simulation should be debriefed as soon as possible, with each person telling what they did and saw, what went well, what didn't, and to see how people felt about the exercise. The group should analyze the incident based on the Dynamics of Accidents Model and make recommendations for how it might have been prevented. Keep in mind that simulations can sometimes be emotionally charged events for people. This may be due to their anxiety about their ability to deal with a real accident or

recollections from other traumatic events. Beware of people who seem to be under tension and make sure to process things either in a group setting or one-on-one.

6. Leader Trainers are not to implement actions during the simulation which could place them or other members of the group at risk. This includes such things as the victim actually becoming hypothermic or dehydrated, getting sleeping bags wet as part of a hypothermia simulation, etc. OA does not want to present a macho, survivalist attitude to its trainees or simulations could become true emergencies.

Policies for Walkouts

The purpose of a walkout is to give the trainees the experience of what it will be like to be completely in charge of a trip. ***It is essential, therefore, that the following policies be complied with.***

1. ***Walkouts are not an automatic part of a Leader Training Trip.*** The leader trainers need to evaluate the strength of the group and decide if such an exercise is appropriate.
2. Walkouts are never to be done unannounced or with "notes" left by leader trainers who have departed. If the leader trainers feel the trainees are ready for a last day walkout, they will brief the trainees on procedures the night before. Leader trainers must emphasize that walkouts *only* occur on Leader Training Trips. They are not appropriate and not permitted on regular trips.
3. Walkouts must always be considered carefully. If there is bad weather or if there is a person with an illness or injury, a walkout should not be done. If the accident potential is increased, leader trainers *must* remain with the trip. This is *required* if any of the participants have a known, serious bee sting allergy. If the trainers wish, they can tell the group that they are "ghost" participants (not really present) and will say nothing, and help with nothing unless an emergency arises. Ghosts can carry group gear if it is set aside for them by the participants, but there is no communication to the ghosts at any time.
4. Walkouts should only be done on the last day of the trip when there is short mileage back to the van. Under ***no*** circumstances should leader trainers walk out the night before the last day.
5. The group should be given instructions that on the morning of the walkout, that the leader trainers will only be observers. They will not help with any of the camp chores or breaking camp. They will not respond to questions except in an emergency. Any group equipment that the participants want the leader trainers to take should be left in a pile for them. The leader trainers will take what they chose to carry.
6. The leader trainers will hike out after the group. The leader trainers will leave about 45 minutes after the group has departed.
7. Equipment distribution - There should be two sets of maps available if a walkout is being considered. Both parties should have basic first aid supplies. The major first aid kit will be carried by the leader trainers.

Debriefing

An informal debriefing should be done daily, preferably at night, to check on how the day went, how people are feeling, what they learned, etc. The last night of the trip (or at the end of the last day) both an individual and a group final debriefing should be done (see Section 9 - Leadership: Transferring the Experience). After dinner, Leader Trainers should meet in a removed spot with each participant for 10-15 minutes. Here are some of the questions you should consider asking.

- What were your expectations of the trip?
- What aspect(s) of the trip did you find most challenging? Most rewarding? Most daunting?
- In what settings did you feel most comfortable? Most uncomfortable?
- What are your thoughts on the way this trip was led? What suggestions would you give to us as leader trainers?
- What type of person would you feel most comfortable leading with?
- What do you feel are your strengths as a leader? Your weaknesses?
- How would you describe your own leadership style?
- What areas do you think you need to work on?
- Are there any problems you wants to bring up away from the rest of the group?

<u>POST-TRIP</u>

1. When the group returns all gear should be cleaned and returned to the equipment room. Any damaged gear should be labeled and put on the work table. The ER should be left spotless!

Evaluations

1. Participants will fill out a self-evaluation form to critique themselves on their own performance and what they have learned, as well as the areas in which they feel they need additional work.
2. Both leaders will get together with each participant after the trip and give that person a verbal evaluation on their performance, strengths, and weaknesses.
3. Both leaders will cooperatively submit a written evaluation of each participant with information on overall performance, strengths, weaknesses, and recommendations regarding that person's leader qualifications.
4. Leader Trainers will administer the Post Trip Skills test to all participants. This is designed to make sure that specific skills have been mastered by the participants.

Participants will be classified on their written evaluation with one of the following definitions.

- **Leader-in-training** - Needs additional experience. List specific areas and instruct the person what they need to do.
- **Assistant Leader** - skills are OK, but needs to lead with someone who has lead before and has a higher level of skills. This is the usual category for people completing a Leader Training Trip.
- **Co-leader** - skills are high enough that the person can lead with another person with similar skills even if both have not lead before.
- **Primary Leader** - hard and soft skills are excellent and this person is capable of leading a trip with someone who has not led before and who made need additional supervision.

WILDERNESS FIRST AID & CPR TRAINING

First aid training is an essential part of any leader training program. The elimination of Red Cross Advanced First Aid and the restructuring of Standard First Aid has left a distinct void in nationally certified first aid courses. What is currently available is either too little to be of use or to much in time and money to expect paraprofessionals to obtain.

In an effort to find an appropriate balance for our leaders, Outdoor Action has developed its own Wilderness First Aid Course. This twenty-hour course is taught by a student group on campus, HEART (Health Education And Rescue Training) which is made up mostly of OA Leaders. The course has been developed over a number of years and is based on the WFR protocols. All materials and techniques for the course have been examined and approved by a physician from the University Health Service. The instructors are all qualified at a higher level of training, at least the NASAR Wilderness First Aid and a number of the instructors are WFR's or EMT's. The success of the course can best be seen by the number of students who go on to take higher level course because they are excited about learning more first aid. This is a testament to the skill and enthusiasm of the instructors. Also, all OA leaders are required to have current certification in adult CPR.

OA also offers the Wilderness Medical Associates Wilderness 32-hour First Aid Course once a year. This allows interested students to increase their level of training and also provides for future instructors for the HEART course. A brief outline of the HEART curriculum is provided below.

The course meets once a week for a five-week period. Each four-hour class is roughly divided between lectures and practical exercises. Classes are kept brief by only presenting the important concepts from the more comprehensive assigned reading. Emphasis is placed on the Patient Assessment System framework which provides a rescuer with the organizational structure for all potential accidents. Frequently the class is divided into rescuers and victims to provide valuable hands-on experience. Each accident simulation is debriefed as a group and several rescuers are required to present SOAP notes. At the end of the course, two larger accident simulations are used to teach triage principles and challenge the rescuers skills.

A university physician addresses special medical issues including diabetes, shoulder reductions, and near drowning as part of each course. Since Anakits are carried on all trips, each student, with the doctor's supervision, practices giving a saline injection to a fellow student.

The HEART Wilderness First Aid certification does not grant any nationally recognized certification. However, certification requires passing both a written and practical exam. The three hour written exam reviews the major topics covered both in class and in the reading. The extensive practical testing requires the student to confront two wilderness injuries and provide effective patient care.

HEART Teaching Outline **(italics indicate practical sessions)**

Class 1
- Quiz
- Organization Information
- Introduction and Overview
- Anatomy and Basic Medical Concepts
- Patient Assessment System (PAS)
- *Body Checks*
- Basic Life Support (BLS)

Class 2
- Quiz
- Circulatory System
- Respiratory System
- Nervous System
- Skin and Soft Tissue Injuries
- *Bandaging*
- Musculoskeletal System
- *Splinting*

Class 3
- Quiz
- Digestive System
- Temperature Regulation
- Toxins
- *Anakits and Sawyer Extractors*
- Environmental Problems
- *Wilderness Accident Simulation*

Class 4
- Quiz
- University Physician
  - Diabetes
  - Shoulder Reduction
  - Near Drowning
  - *Practice Injections*
- Backcountry Medicine
- Wilderness Search and Rescue
- First Aid Kits
- Practical Considerations
- *Triage Simulation*

Class 5
- Practical Final
- Written Exam

SAFETY MANAGEMENT WORKSHOP

All leaders are required to attend a two-hour safety management workshop. This is considered a critical part of the leader training process. The workshop covers the Dynamics of Accidents Model developed by Alan Hale. Leaders are introduced to the model and to their role in presenting environmental briefings and educating participants about the model. The specific incident report forms used by OA are covered with an explanation of how they are used to make program changes. Finally, an analysis of some real accidents illustrates how the formula can be used to reduce accident potential and prevent accidents. In addition to the workshop, the Dynamics of Accidents Model is also discussed during the Leader Training Course and stressed during the trip.

GROUP SKILLS WORKSHOP

Teaching group dynamics and effective leadership and facilitation skills is perhaps the most challenging part of the leadership development process. Whatever we may do, there is always so much more to teach. Once again the question of balancing what must be needs to be taught against how much we can expect of our students. Over the years, OA has developed a workable group dynamics training format. The proof of striking that balance is that most students evaluating the workshop say that although it was very long, they are glad they participated.

The Group Skills workshop is a 12-14 hour workshop focusing on group dynamics and leadership skills. The workshop begins with a three-hour session the first evening followed by a full day session the next day running from 9:00 AM to 10:00 PM with breaks for lunch and dinner. A mixed format is used which includes small group discussion, dyads, journal writing, group exercises, role plays, lectures, debriefing, and initiative games. Part of the reason for the length of the program is to simulate the types of interactions that will take place on a trip. The challenges experienced in both the exercises and the length the workshop bring home many of the concepts we are trying to get across. Like any OA activity, making new friends is another goal which the length of time and types of interpersonal interaction encourages. By the end of the program, participants feel they have made new friends and learned a great deal.

The workshop is divided into the following general sessions:

- Philosophy of Outdoor Education
- Leadership
- Dealing with Problems
- Transferring the Experience

The following general concepts are taught during the workshop:

Situational Leadership - the idea that there is one most effective leadership style for a person or a group based on the situation. It is based on a bell curve set on a xy axis of relationship and task behaviors and the maturity of the participants regarding the task.

Teachable Moment - finding an opportunity to introduce some new knowledge or experience that "fits" with what is occurring.

Bag of tricks - everything on this page and more are part of your bag of tricks

Leader's Radar - sensing how individual participants and the group as a whole are doing both physically and emotionally. Using this assessment to decide appropriate leadership strategies.

Thaw-Shift-Refreeze - the basic model of how we change our behavior. Often it is a challenge or disequilibrium that initiates the Thaw and a supportive environment is usually required to help Refreeze the new behavior.

Challenge - challenge is often a fundamental part of the Thaw-Shift-Refreeze Cycle. A challenge occurs when there is a goal and an obstacle to overcome to reach the goal. The goal can be internal or external

and the obstacle can be internal or external. If the participant attributes the locus (internal vs. external) of either the goal or obstacle incorrectly, it may lead to frustration. The person may need help seeing the situation more clearly.

The Edge - the point at which we make the shift to the new behavior in the Thaw-Shift-Refreeze cycle is known as the edge. We are at the edge of our know behavior moving into new and possibly unknown territory. This can be a period of great stress for the person both physically and emotionally (which can have safety implications in some activities). It may be necessary to do some debriefing and processing with the person right then and there.

Debriefing - a process that encourages both personal reflection and self-disclosure. It is accomplished in various ways and is an essential part of Transference.

Safe Environment - creating a "safe" emotional environment so that participants can fell comfortable telling the group if they are having problems.

Task/Relationship Roles - leadership can be broken down into specific types of behaviors. Task Behaviors are aimed at moving the group in the direction of completing a task. Relationship behaviors are aimed at fostering effective group interaction. Leaders may have strengths in one or both areas and should strive to improve their behavioral repertoire to include both. As the trip progresses, the participants may take on more of these roles as indicated by the Situational Leadership Model.

Challenge by Choice - an essential aspect of challenge is that the individual should not be forced or coerced into it. In some situations (e.g. bad weather) there is nothing we can do. But in situations where activities are voluntary people must feel the have the right to say no and not feel a loss of self-worth. This is part of creating a Safe Environment.

Setting the Tone - recognizing that the opening stages of any group are very pliable for establishing group norms. This is the time to introduce and model appropriate types of behavior. It is also the time to correct behaviors which are inappropriate before they become established norms.

Assessment - the process of using Leader's Radar to assess the current state of participants and the group and apply the Situational Leadership Model to determining the most effective leadership behavior for that situation.

Leaders as Role Models - leaders are carefully watched for signs of behavior that is appropriate or inappropriate.

Facilitator - one of the leader's primary goals is to facilitate effective group interaction and encourage personal growth.

Honesty - it is imperative that you are honest with the group at all times. There should be no hidden agendas.

Your Disability is your Opportunity - the notion that in some situations it is useful to try to turn a problem into a positive situation.

Success and Failure are not Absolutes - the idea that not achieving your stated goal is still success. If you aim to get from A-Z and get to M you have still traveled a great distance. If someone is having difficulty, you may need to help them see this.

I Language - owning your feelings rather than placing the responsibility for them on others by saying "I feel _____ when you _____."

Gender Inclusive Language - since language can have extremely subtle effects on individuals it is important to model this behavior. It will make some more comfortable and may challenge others leading to a positive Thaw-Shift-Refreeze.

Respect for Others - this is an inherent value for OA, a form of minimal impact in working with people. This means that we have to create an environment where everyone is respected. You don't have to agree with the person, but you need to respect them.

Accept the Person but Not the Behavior - the idea that if someone is exhibiting problematic behavior that you should focus on the behavior and still communicate your interest and caring for the person.

Refocus - some people in seeking reasons for why things happen some people tend to be internal attributers (assume it is something they did or didn't do) and some people are external attributers (assuming it is caused by something outside themselves). Neither is always true and often it is a combination. If someone is having difficulty, try to determine how they are making their attribution, and if it is, in fact, an appropriate assessment of the situation.

Transference - the process of transferring the new knowledge learned from the trip back to daily life and incorporating it there. Debriefing is essential to successful transference.

Recipes, basic ingredients, chefs and cooking styles - a metaphor for leadership in which the leaders are chefs. Each may have their own recipes but there are certain fundamental cooking skills which must be mastered by all.

Compensating Behavior - the notion that the initial interpretation for why someone is behaving a certain way may be incorrect. There may be another issue and the person's behavior is an attempt to compensate for a situation they find uncomfortable.

Anxiety Meter - a method of checking to see how stressed people are feeling.

Space Tolerance - the idea that each leader tolerates a certain "response space" between when s/he asks for something to be done and when, if participants don't jump in, s/he will do it herself. Leaders have different space tolerances and problems can result. Co-leaders should discuss their space tolerance before a trip and negotiate how they will deal with differences. If I have a low space tolerance, and no one steps in, I feel uncomfortable that a need is not being met and I step in. This can prevent others (leaders and participants) from taking responsibility and can lock me into one role on a trip. I may need to expand my space tolerance to create opportunities for others.

Dealing with Conflict

1. Compensation - ask yourself if the behavior you are seeing is compensation for something else. Try to identify the root issue and deal with that.
2. Accept person but you don't have to accept the behavior.
3. Quote OA Policies
4. Quickly correct inappropriate language or other problems. Don't let bad patterns get started and supported in the group.
5. Know how much to push.
6. OK for leaders to show their Edge - I'm not comfortable with unsupervised bouldering.

Group Dynamics Policies

1. No drugs or alcohol are permitted on trips. If found, they should be confiscated immediately and returned at the end of the trip.
2. Romantic relationships between leaders and participants should not start on the trip. Wait until you get back to campus.
3. Meeting other groups - avoid competition between groups. "Raiding" activities are not appropriate or permitted.
4. If you will pass through "civilization" during your trip, discuss at the beginning of your trip what level of interaction people should have with civilization. Let the group consensus decide it.

See Appendix 1 for the detailed schedule of the workshop. The schedule is based on my own short hand to remind me what comes next. I hope you can decipher some of what we are doing.

ONGOING TRAINING

In order to maintain the level of skills of OA Leaders, we have worked to incorporate a number of ongoing training opportunities.

All Leader Trips: these trips are 4-6 day backpacking trips only open to leaders. This allows the trip to be structured at a higher challenge level in terms of terrain, mileage, etc. since basic wilderness skills do not have to be taught as on a normal or Fresh Trip.

Annual CPR re-certification: Leaders are required to re-certify in CPR each year.

Leader Skills Day: This is designed to be a fun afternoon for leaders to get together and work on skills. The event consists of the following stations: groups games, map & compass, and first aid simulation. Group games is self-explanatory and just a good bonding experience for leaders. The map and compass training includes a review of basic compass skills and a short orienteering course. The first aid simulations is run by HEART first aid instructors. Some leaders are used as victims with moulage. Other leaders are rescuers and are divided into different rescue groups with 3-4 members each. One leader is assigned as triage officer and one as incident commander. The rescue teams are given first aid kits and told that there has been a terrible accident. They must locate the victims, perform patient assessment, provide treatment, prepare for transport. An extensive debriefing is performed at the end of the simulation to give teams feedback on how they performed.

Pre-Frosh Trip Training: Leaders are required to return a day and a half before the Fresh Trip Program begins. The first day a number of refresher workshops are offered which all leaders are required to attend. These include the following:

- Stove Repair
- Water Purification
- Blister Care
- Bee Sting Care
- Map & Compass
- First Aid Simulation
- Minimal Impact